

May 2018

Republican Party of Pennsylvania.

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Recommended Citation

"Republican Party of Pennsylvania." (2018). *Circulars, Pamphlets, Programs, Invitations, Flyers, Newsletters, Playbill & Broadsides*. 13.
http://dh.howard.edu/og_circulars/13

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PENNSYLVANIA

Proclaims Liberty to All Men!

THE COLORED PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA FULLY PROTECTED IN THEIR CIVIL RIGHTS.

Read, and Pass the Word to all Colored Citizens.

Before the Civil Rights bill was thought of at all the Republican party had passed laws in several States practically enforcing the right of negroes to the same treatment as whites on public conveyances and at the polls. The Democratic party then and repeatedly afterward protested against those rights. The records of these acts of the counter-resolutions passed by Democratic conventions is interesting now. It is a little more than ten years ago since Charles Sumner urged the right of Congress under the Fourteenth Amendment to pass a law enforcing the rights of negroes. He died without accomplishing that purpose and it was afterward left to Senator Howe and General Ben Butler, both astute lawyers, to frame the famous Civil Rights bill which was then passed. The spirit of the same law had, however, been in force in Pennsylvania several years. Witness the following act passed by a Republican Legislature and signed by a Republican Governor, March 22, 1867:

Be it enacted, etc., That on and after the passage of this act, any railroad or railway corporation, within this Commonwealth, that shall exclude, or allow to be excluded, by their agents, conductors, or employees, from any of their passenger cars, any person, or persons, on account of color, or race, or that shall refuse to carry in any of their cars, thus set apart, any person, or persons, on account of color, or race, or that shall, for such reason, compel, or attempt to compel, any person, or persons, to occupy any particular part of any of their cars, set apart for the accommodation of people as passengers, shall be liable, in an action of debt, to the person thereby injured, or aggrieved, in the sum of \$500, the same to be recovered, in an action of debt, as like amounts are now by law recoverable.

Three years later the Republicans emphasized their position in a law which provided, furthermore:

That so much of every act of assembly as provides that only white freemen shall be entitled to vote or be registered as voters, or as claiming to vote at any general or special election of this Commonwealth, be and the same is hereby repealed; and that hereafter all freemen, without distinction of color, shall be enrolled and registered, and shall, when otherwise qualified under existing laws, be entitled to vote at all general and special elections in this Commonwealth.

In 1881 the Republican Legislature passed a bill making it "unlawful for any school director, superintendent or teacher to make any distinction whatever on account of, or by reason of the race or color of any pupil or scholar who may be in attendance upon, or seeking admission to, any public or common school, maintained wholly or in part under the school laws of this Commonwealth." This act was approved by Governor Hoyt, June 8, 1881.

THE DEMOCRATIC POSITION.

Not less emphatic, although in strange contrast to the above laws, was the following resolution which *The Press* reproduces from the records of the Democratic State Convention held July 7, 1862:

Resolved, That the party favoritism, or crime, whichever it may be called, that seeks to turn the slaves of the Southern States loose, to overrun the North and enter into competition with the white laboring masses, thus degrading and insulting their manhood by placing them upon an equality with negroes in their occupation, is insulting to our race and merits our most emphatic and unqualified condemnation.

Resolved, That this is a government of white men, and was established exclusively for the white race. That the negro race are not entitled to, and ought not to be admitted to, political or social equality with the white race.

Again at the Democratic State Convention, held at Harrisburg, March 5, 1866, after the negroes were declared free men, the Democrats unanimously resolved:

That the white race is alone entitled to control the government of the Republic, and we are unwilling to grant negroes the right to vote.

Then, two months after the passage of the Republican law, another Democratic State Convention again put itself on record.

That, each State having under the Constitution the exclusive right to prescribe the qualifications of its own electors, we proclaim as a usurpation and an outrage the establishment of negro suffrage in any of the States by the coercive exercise of Federal power, and we shall resist to the last resort the threatened measures of the leaders of the Republican party to interfere by acts of Congress with the elective franchise in the State of Pennsylvania.

Again the wrath of a Democratic State Convention boiled over on March 5, 1868, and the following resolution was passed:

Resolved, That the Republican party is responsible for the delay in the restoration of the Southern States to their just relations in the Union and for the government of the people by military rule. That the purpose of these measures is to perpetuate radical power through the votes of illiterate negroes, and that these are the great primary causes of the present prostrate condition of productive industry in all its departments.

On the 25th March, 1869, the House of Representatives at Harrisburg passed finally the Fifteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution by a vote of 61 yeas to 38 nays, Republicans all voting in the affirmative, and Democrats all voting in the negative.

On March 11, 1869, the Fifteenth Amendment passed the State Senate, yeas 18, nays 15, the Republicans all voting in the affirmative, and the Democrats all voting in the negative.

After four months the Democratic State Convention of that year again resolved:

That the Democratic party of Pennsylvania is opposed to conferring upon the negro the right to vote, and we do emphatically deny that there is any right or power in Congress or elsewhere to impose negro suffrage upon the people of this State in opposition to their will.

Colored Men of Pennsylvania! You will thus see that the Republican Party of Pennsylvania has saved to you all the rights which others have lost by the recent decision. They can and will be taken away if the Democrats are continued in power. Turn out, to a man, on Tuesday, November 6th, and vote the Republican ticket, and thus give notice to the lawmakers that you value Civil Rights as something worth at least the effort required to cast a vote.